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TOP SECRET

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

JUN 1 1961

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

Refer to: I-18,631/61

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Request for Special Estimate Concerning Southeast Asia

It seems to us that the recent spate of information indicating the possibility of a major North Vietnamese and Chinese Communist build-up, directed toward Southeast Asia, calls for an urgent appraisal of North Vietnamese and Chinese Communist intentions. I should therefore like to request a special NIE on this subject, for completion at the earliest possible date, which I would suggest be left for negotiation.

I realize the difficulty of making the necessary assumptions concerning the course of the Geneva Conference and the possibility of SEATO or US action. It would be useful, however, to cover North Vietnamese and Chinese Communist aims at Geneva, what their concurrent actions in the area might be, and their reaction to such contingencies as (1) a result of the Geneva Conference that left a Souvanna Phouma government that included Pathet Lao representatives; (2) introduction of US forces to hold the key Mekong River points in Laos. A sharpening of the present somewhat diffuse estimate of the effects of China's internal situation on her actions in the Southeast Asia area would also seem desirable.

These are suggestions for scope, and it may be that they would make the estimate too diverse. The central question concerns the evaluation of the Communist build-up and whether it means we are in for a highly determined offensive no matter what.

OSD REVIEW COMPLETED

(EXECUTIVE READING LINE REMOVED)

*Paul H. Nitze*

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Paul H. Nitze  
Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA)

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Dulles

A copy of this memo has been sent to Ting Sheldon, as Acting DD/I, for necessary action. After you have noted we will show this to General Cabell.

JSE (13 June 61)  
(DATE)

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